CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
FEBRUARY082025

Scripture Story: Luke 2:39-52.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 7-9.

growing up

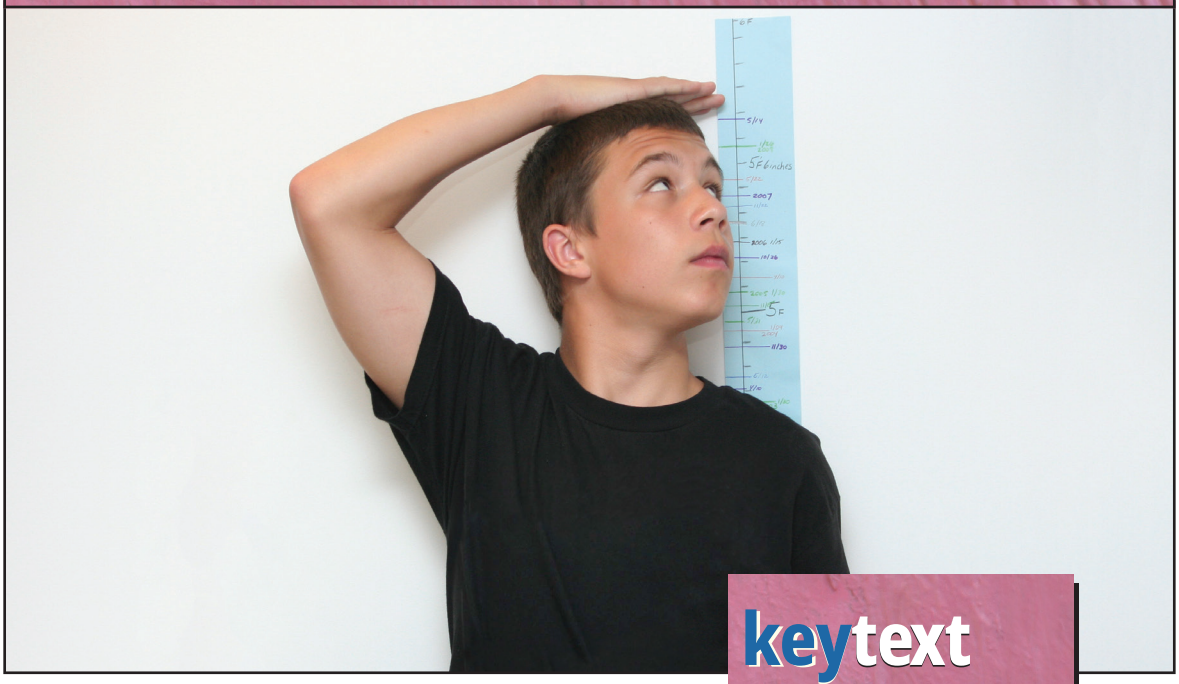


Photo by Luis Guerra, Jr.

keytext

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

(Luke 2:52)

flashlight

"Jesus did not ignore His relation to His earthly parents. From Jerusalem He returned home with them, and aided them in their life of toil. He hid in His own heart the mystery of His mission, waiting submissively for the appointed time for Him to enter upon His work. For eighteen years after He had recognized that He was the Son of God, He acknowledged the tie that bound Him to the home at Nazareth, and performed the duties of a son, a brother, a friend, and a citizen" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 82).

what do you think?

If Jesus were a teenager in my school or neighborhood, I think I'd probably

____ want to spend time with Him, because He'd be really friendly.
____ admire Him and learn from Him.
____ think that I have to change and be more like Him by God's grace.
____ want to be in His presence constantly.

did you know?

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke each dedicate a little less than two chapters telling the story of Jesus' birth. Each of the Gospels gives several chapters to Jesus' death and resurrection, with most of the pages in between telling the stories of Jesus' ministry—the stories He told, the sermons He preached, the people He healed. Only Luke spends any time at all on Jesus' childhood and youth. From about age 2 to age 30, we learn about the young Jesus only from 13 verses—most of those being about His trip to the Temple at age 12.

Except for that one story, we know almost nothing about Jesus as a child, as a teenager, and as a young man. We can make guesses based on the descriptions given in Luke 2:40, 52: He "became strong" and was "filled with wisdom"; He grew "in favor with God and men." In other words, He was everything He was supposed to be, appropriate for His age. At 6 He probably didn't have the same kind of understanding of His heavenly mission and message that He did at 26. He had to grow, learn, and discover who He was, just as we do.

INTO THE STORY

"So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

"His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.'

"And He said to them, 'Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?' But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

"Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

(Luke 2:39-52)



OUT OF THE STORY

How might Mary and Joseph have taught Jesus when He was a child? Do you think they raised Him differently from how they raised their other children?

_____
_____
_____
_____

What is the message of this story to you? What can you learn from Jesus, whose desire was to spend time learning more about God in His Father's House? Explain your answer.

_____
_____
_____
_____

How would you have responded if you were in the place of Mary or Joseph when Jesus said, "Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?"

_____
_____
_____
_____

What are some lessons you can draw for yourself from Jesus' eagerness to learn more about God from the priests in the Temple? How can you follow Jesus' example as a young person?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" **(Exodus 20:12).**

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" **(Deuteronomy 6:6, 7).**

"My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; for they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck" **(Proverbs 1:8, 9).**

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" **(Proverbs 22:6).**

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" **(Ephesians 6:1).**

further insight

"By one day's neglect they [Joseph and Mary] lost the Saviour; but it cost them three days of anxious search to find Him. So with us; by idle talk, evilspeaking, or neglect of prayer, we may in one day lose the Saviour's presence, and it may take many days of sorrowful search to find Him, and regain the peace that we have lost."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83

Sabbath

Read Luke 2:41-49.

God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. . . . He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God" (The Son, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 4). The story of Jesus' visit to the Temple at age 12 (Luke 2:41-49) teaches significant lessons both to young and old about the importance of honoring God and seeking His will for our lives.

Jesus' example shows that it's possible as a teen to go through that search for independence without rebelling against parents and other authority figures. The story in Luke 2 tells us that Jesus went back home and "was obedient" to His parents during His teen and young adult years, even as He was growing up into the person God had planned for Him to be.

What can you learn from this story that you can apply at this time in your life?

_____
_____
_____

Sunday

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

Why do you think the Bible tells us so little about Jesus' early years?

For each of the following phrases from Luke 2, write an example of something you think Jesus as a child or teen *might* have done that would fit with that description:

He became strong _____
He was filled with wisdom _____
The grace of God was upon Him _____
He was subject to His parents _____
He increased in stature _____
He increased in favor with God _____
He increased in favor with man _____

Monday

Read Hebrews 4:15 and Hebrews 8:1, 2.

Do you think it was easy or difficult for Jesus to resist temptations? What helped Him resist temptations? What encouragement do you find, knowing that Jesus is our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Tuesday

Read Luke 2:52.

Read the *Flashlight* section of the lesson, which talks about the time between Jesus' visit to the Temple at 12 and the time He began His ministry at age 30. Why do you think Jesus waited for so long before He started preaching and teaching, if He already knew what God wanted Him to do? What valuable lessons do you think Jesus learned during those years in Nazareth?

Wednesday

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.

All the verses in the *Punch Lines* section contain biblical advice to parents or to children. From that list of Bible texts (or other Bible verses you know of), is there an applicable lesson for your family context?

_____
_____
_____

What are ways you can relate to your parents respectfully and obediently based on the Bible's advice?

_____
_____
_____

Thursday

Read Matthew 6:33.

Jesus spent 18 years, between ages 12 and 30, learning what God wanted Him to do—and only about three years doing it. Action is important, but so is waiting for God's timing and learning the lessons He wants us to learn. Think of Moses, who spent 40 years in the wilderness preparing to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

Maybe this is *your* time of preparation. God is getting you ready for the work He wants you to do in the world. What's one practical thing you can do today to help discover God's will for your life?

_____
_____
_____

Friday

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.

As you pray today, ask God to make you more like Jesus as a young person—learning about Him and growing in a way that's appropriate to your age and in keeping with His will.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 7-9.

**Humble Hero* is a special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companionbooks#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.